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CONTENTS.

GENERAL NOTES.

PERSONALIA.

PROGRESS IN OSAKA.

GEORGE ALLCHIN.

PLAN FOR A RELIGIOUS CONGRESS.

HIROMICHI KOZAKI.

NIGATA CELEBRATIONS.

WILLIAM LEAVITT CURTIS.

DAY OF PRAYER AT KOBE COLLEGE.

SUSAN ANNETTE SEARLE.

TSUYAMA AFTER A YEAR.

SCHUYLER SAMPSON WHITE.

WORK AT HOKUBU.

MARY ELLEN WAINWRIGHT.

A SHINTO FESTIVAL.

ARTHUR WILLIS STANFORD.

HYUGA ITEMS.

CYRUS ALONZO CLARK.

KOBE TO TOTTORI.

HENRY JAMES BENNETT.

General Notes.

Kobe has about one Christian to one hundred and sixty-five of the population.

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We offer an apology for the long article, and it must not be considered a precedent, for copy was very short this time. We learnt on the day we expected to receive them, that we were out on two articles counted on.

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Otaru *Kumi-ai* Church has decided to ask no aid from the Mission from January first, last. The Church does not intend to ask immediately for admission

to the *Kumi-ai* body, but looks forward to membership after a year or two, or sooner, if circumstances favor.

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Did you have a feast and scatter parcht beans over the house on the 4th? That was *setsubun*, ushering in spring. The beans, if each member of your family takes a number equal to his age, and clutters up the house sufficiently with them, crying: "*Oni wa soto! Fuku wa uchi!*" "*Vamoose, ye devils! Entrez, good luck!*" will bring great blessings to your home! Miss Grace Stowe, had something to say on this in *Mission News*, XIII, 6.

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The *daikan* or great cold began on Jan. 21st, and closed on Feb. 4. *Risshun* or the opening of spring, came on the 5th. Japanese have a curious notion about the peculiar virtue of cold water during *daikan*. They think it is purer than that at any other time, and that if you drink freely it will ensure health for the year. Not a few make pilgrimages at night to some shrine of *Fudō*, and there pour cold water over their naked bodies, thinking this kind of *gyo*, or penance, has special merit.

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At 1 a.m., Jan. 16, a conflagration started in South Osaka, and raged nearly thru the forenoon, consuming about five thousand houses. The authorities seem to have supplied necessary money for relief, and a Christian committee co-

MAR 14 1912

operated with them in caring for the needy. As in case of the still greater fire in the northern part, in the summer of 1910, a prostitute quarter was burnt out. Now, as then, the question of removal outside the city, or, better, abolition, has been started vigorously. Two very large public meetings have been held, and a fund has been proposed to agitate the matter. We hope to have an article in our next issue, about this subject.

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Mr. Tokonami says that examination of conscripts shows that they have forgotten well-nigh all they learnt during the six years of compulsory attendance at school, and as the majority of Japanese youth never go beyond the compulsory course, it is fair to suppose that pretty much all the moral precepts taught have been entirely forgotten. It is doubtful whether students in some of the higher grades retain much more. He virtually confesses that all attempts, on the part of the educational authorities, to teach morality, have failed in practical results. He wisely recognizes the necessity of moral education based on religion as the most potent factor in creating moral character.

* * *

Dissatisfaction with the results of moral influences in the public schools has become widespread in the nation, and for several years attempts have been made to improve the influences, but official efforts seem to have been misdirected. It appears to be realized that attempts hitherto have largely been futile. The present Vice-Minister of the Home Department has come forward with a plan which is novel and striking. It is proposed to utilize Christianity, Buddhism and Shinto in such a way as to promote public morality and the interests of the State. "In order to bring about an affiliation of the three religions it is necessary to connect religion with the State more closely, so as to give it additional dignity, and thus impress upon the public the necessity of attaching greater importance to religious matters. The culture of national ethics

can be perfected by education combined with religion. At present moral doctrines are inculcated by education alone, but it is impossible.....unless the people are brought into touch with the fundamental conception known as God, Buddha, or Heaven, as taught in religions." A long and interesting exposition of Mr. Tokonami's views has been published, and it is proposed to convene a conference of the three religions, on the 25th instant, with the view to gaining their united co-operation in striving for the improvement of morality, which, it is admitted, has not kept pace with the progress of material civilization in this era.

* * *

Some weeks before New Year's, the Emperor gives out a subject for New Year's poems, and poetical citizens are permitted to send poems on the subject to the Bureau of Poetry in the Household Department, called *O Uta-dokoro*. Out of those sent in, a very small number, regarded as of sufficient merit, are selected for official recognition, and yet fewer of these are honored by a reading in the presence of the Emperor. The subject this year was: "Storks in Pines," and there were well over 29,000 poems sent from all over Japan, and from many places abroad. The public meeting for reading the twenty-one selected for the purpose, occurred, as usual, during the latter half of January, in the Phoenix Hall of the Palace. First came "those composed by the officials in charge of the day's party, then those presented by the Minister of the Imperial Household, the Grand Chamberlain, and others." Poems of princes and princesses were read twice, as mark of honor. The Empress' poem was read three times. Last of all, the Emperor's poem was read five times. There appear to be official readers, to whom the poems are delivered in order. There were fifty-eight selected out of the entire number, and the twenty-one, which were read, appeared, along with the imperial poems, in the *Osaka Mainichi*, Jan. 24. These are all what is known as *tanka*, with only thirty-one syllables.

The origin and constitution of this *O Uta-dokoro*, or Bureau of Poetry, if we are rightly informed, is somewhat as follows. As early as 905 A.D. Daigo Tennō was specially interested in poetry, and commissioned Ki-no-Tsurayuki and other poets, to collect the best poems of the previous time. The result was the *Kokinjū*, or *Kokin Wakashū*, published in 922, and containing upwards of a thousand poems, including *Kimi-ga-yo*, which, with slight change, was adopted in the Meiji era as the national anthem. In the reign of Murakami Tennō, 951, a second collection was named *Kosen Wakashū*. During the reign of Tsuchimikado Tennō, in 1201, another collection, *Shinko-Kinjū*, or *Shinko Waka-Kinshū*, was made. But no such permanent organization as the present one, continued thru the centuries, and it was not until the end of 1897 that the *O Uta-dokoro* was established by the Household Department. It consists of a Chief, Baron Takasaki, a Shuji (Director), seven Yoriudo (Clerks), fifteen Sanko (Referees, to compare the poems), and one Rokuji (Secretary).

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To illustrate the difficulty of using the Japanese language as a medium for conveying religious truth, we may recall the actual experience related by a Japanese pastor, who attended a service, at whose close a well-dressed, seemingly intelligent Japanese inquired: "Do these Christians worship wolves?" He had heard in prayer, the invocation, "O! Kami, yo!" and supposed it was, "Ōkami, yo!," *kami* being the term for God, and *ōkami*, that for wolf. A Japanese woman heard an address on the "Publican and the Pharisee," and observed that she was pretty well acquainted with birds, but couldn't make out what that *mitsugutori* was. *Tori* means bird, and *mitsugutori* means tax collector. A Japanese ignorant of Christianity, heard a group of Christians talking about it. They used many terms like *seishinteki*, *fukuin-teki*, *komponenteki*, *zettaiteki*. The stranger broke in with: "I thought Christianity

was a religion of peace, but you seem to be talking about enemies all the time." *Teki* is an adjectival ending, and the noun *teki* means enemy. The title of the Book of Acts is *Shito Gyoden*. *Shito* means apostles. *Hito* means man, and is frequently pronounced with a sibilant sound. More than one Japanese has inquired, "Who is that man *Gyoden* they talk so much about?" This class of difficulties besets Japanese as well as foreigners. Then there is another which besets the latter, thru ignorance or carelessness. A missionary told us, the other day, that after an unexpectedly quick return from an island in the Inland Sea, a Japanese friend asked how he got back so soon. *Kojiki ni notte kairimashita*, was his reply. *Kojiki* means beggar. *Kojoki* means a small steamer. A foreigner asked at a post-office for some *ni sen no tebukuro*, "two sen gloves," when he wished two *sen jobukuro*, envelopes. A fervent preacher exhorted his audience: *Tsuma wo sute, yo!* "Put away your wives," when he thought he was saying *tsumi*, sins. A lady who laughed at her husband for "embarking on a beggar," was herself caught by him when she spoke of "daily strength for daily needs" (*hibi no chikara*) as *hebi no chikara*, serpent's strength. Another lady on first starting out at housekeeping, directed her cook to boil some *niji*, rainbow, for dinner, when the cook politely inquired if *negi* (onions) wouldn't do as well. A young missionary who was making excellent progress in the language, was telling her class of old ladies about the *kingyo* (goldfish), to their perplexity, when she supposed she was talking about the golden text (*kingen*). It is actually said that a popular foreign lady, who has many Japanese friends, but whose *forte* is not linguistics, when she desires her servant to remove the peel of an orange or potato, says: "*Mikan (or imo) no kawa sayonara kudasai!*". "Please say farewell to the orange peel." We think we are entitled to stop now, for this last is the limit, and we believe our readers will cry, "Hold! Eno!"

Personalia.

Mr. Dwight Davis is a junior at Oberlin College.

Miss Elizabeth W. Pettee is at her uncle's, in Durham, N.H.

Miss C. B. DeForest luncht with the F. N. Whites, during her visit at Chicago.

Miss Edith Curtis' address is: 4 Aoyama Gakuin, Tokyo, at Rev. G. F. Draper's.

Miss McKowan's address is: 30 Kouun Machi, Mita, Shiba, Tokyo, at Rev. Gilbert Bowles'.

Miss Flora Kraus Heebner, Jan. 29, sailed by the *Santo Maru*, for Chinwangtao and Tientsin.

Mrs. J. D. Davis suddenly started for Miyazaki on the evening of the 29th ultimo, to visit the Oldses.

Miss Gertrude Cozad spent the holidays at Cleveland, and has since been making a visit at New Haven, Ct.

Miss Belle Allchin was champion of the lower section, first and second classes, at the tennis tournament at Newton, Mass., high school, last fall.

Miss Coe's address is: 53 I-sara-go Cho, Shiba, Tokyo, at Rev. H. E. Coleman's. "We are all started in our school, and are thoroly enjoying it."

Mr. Louis Leverett Davis makes his home with his annt, Mrs. Sawyer, at 806 Highland Av., Elgin, Ill., and travels for a machinery firm at Elgin.

It is good news that Miss Sarah Louise Day, Treasurer, and Miss Kate G. Lamson, Foreign Secretary, of the Woman's Board, Boston, are due at Yokohama, Mch 12, by the *Austria*.

Mrs. J. W. Churchill, who spent about three months with her sister, Mrs. Gordon, at Kyoto, sailed by the *Minnesota*, on Jan. 10, for Manila, to make her home for a time, with Capt. and Mrs. Churchill.

Miss Adams' ill health still renders it necessary that she should largely throw off responsibility for her Hanabatake work for a season, and on the 5th she came to Kobe to be with the Stanfords, for the present.

Florence Stratton Iglehart, eight pounds,

was born at Yokohama, 6.30 a. m., Jan. 30. Congratulations to the parents, Rev. Chas. W. and Mrs. Florence Allchin Iglehart—and to the grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Allchin.

We regret that Miss Caroline Mary Telford, of Oberlin, O., has lost her sister the past autumn, the one with whom she had made her home for several years, and with whom she was anticipating making it again in the near future.

Mrs. Curtis was taken seriously ill on New Year's eve, with great suffering, which was relieved by hyperdermic treatment. For ten days, or more, she was confined to bed, but we are glad to report that she escaped serious results.

Jan. 23, to Mr. Hollis Adelbert Wilbur and Mrs. Wilbur, of the Y.M.C.A., at 3 of 33 Kitano Cho, 2 Chome, Kobe, was born a son, Halsey Hulburt Mattheson Wilbur. Mr. Wilbur has been very ill with pneumonia since the 2nd, but has safely past the crisis.

On Jan. 18 the ladies of the Kobe Union Church gave a reception at Miss Howe's, to Rev. Stanley F. Gutelius, the new pastor, and to Mrs. Gutelius. It was largely attended. The Guteliuses have a good house, in a fine neighborhood, at 55 Kitano Cho, 4 Chome, commanding a superior view of the harbor.

During Miss Parmelee's eastern visit, she stopt a brief time at the home of Miss Julia Wilson, member of our Mission at Kyoto and Okayama, from Oct. 3, 1877 to Je 20, 1880. Miss Wilson resides at 47 Second Av., New Brighton, N.Y., and is actively interested in benevolent and city missionary work.

Mr. and Mrs. Clark have spent twenty years in Hyuga, and their Japanese friends have been wishing to celebrate duly this anniversary. The editor of *Hyuga Kyoho*, a Christian paper, has had something to say, illustrated by a cut of the Clarks. Mrs. Clark, however, has been taking a long vacation at Kyoto.

Owing to Mrs. Gleason's poor health, Mr. and Mrs. Geo. Gleason, of Osaka Y.M.C.A., returned to America for a year's rest, by the *Shinyo Maru*, leaving

Kobe on Jan. 27. The Gleasons are building a new residence at Sumiyoshi, but its superintendence will have to fall to others. The family has been boarding with Miss Howe for several months.

Mr. Hilton Staples Pedley spent his last year at vocal training under Mrs. Ruggles, the specialist known to all Missionary Home sojourners, at Auburndale, Mass. But his specialty is the organ, and the present year he is passing at the musical department of Harvard University. For three summers he has been surveying the Canadian Northwest—big job, that.

Mr. Colcord Bartlett is a junior at Phillips Andover Academy, and has taken honors in algebra; he is a member of the Dramatic Club. He visited the Rowlands, at Auburndale, during the holidays, and we understand that he has made *remarkable* progress; for the fact that he is now only fifteen years old, yet stands over six feet one inch in his gym. shoes, is remarkt upon.

Miss Agnes Allchin, of Newton, Mass., high school, whipt all comers, except one, in the autumn tennis tournament, in the upper section consisting of the third and fourth classes; the rains spoiled the courts, so that the trial with this winner, had to be postponed, and the actual championship left undetermined. She won a cup at Walnut Hill Seminary, the previous year. Osaka can play tennis *some*.

In addition to his many other accomplishments, Rev. John M. Lydgate, of Kauai, Hawaii, proves to be a historical dramatist. He composed a play, "Mary Queen of Scots," and then, with Mrs. Lydgate's assistance, drilled the local public school children in it, for a performance which came off Dec. 16. It will be remembered that Mr. and Mrs. Lydgate attended a part of our mission meeting at Arima, last May.

Oct. 4, 1911, Mr. Onward Bates of Chicago, one of our MISSION NEWS family, read a paper on "Fundamentals," before the Western Society of Engineers, of which he is an honored member; it was printed in the Journal of that Socie-

ty, in November, and makes good reading for one who is not a civil engineer. Besides gathering up experience from a successful life-work, it contains fun and humor, which keep us awake, even if they didn't his tired wife, who dozed off as he read to her one evening.

On her way across the continent Miss C. B. DeForest spent a week in Kansas City, Mo., by the women's association of whose First Church, she is supported. "Dinners and receptions gave her opportunity to meet many of the people personally. Formal addresses captivated her hearers. Magic effect was wrought on the church by this week of personal contact; to see the new interest aroused and personal responsibility felt; to note members never before interested in foreign missions waking up to the larger responsibility was a joy."

Miss Katharine Priest Crane, of Mt. Sterling, Ill., but lately a teacher in the Imperial Ching Hua College, the "Indemnity College," in the suburbs of Peking, was thrown out of her work by the revolution. She began regular work in our Baikwa School, Osaka, last month, in vocal and instrumental music, but has been interrupted by a light case of typhoid fever, which necessitated her entrance to the International Hospital, at Kobe. We are glad to report that she is about recovered. She graduated at Smith, 1897, and took her M.A. in history at Columbia in 1907. She was formerly student secretary, Y.W.C.A., under both the New England Committee, and the American.

Some of us recall the visit to Japan, a few years ago, of Dr. and Mrs. Lester Curtis, of Chicago. In *The Chronicle*, a monthly publishd by the University Cong'l Church, we find an article by Dr. Curtis, on "Our Missionary Enterprises," which shows just that kind of comprehension of the worthwhileness of the great foreign missionary movement, that every layman at home should realize. In the course of the article he has this to say of Dr. DeForest, whom he visited at Sendai. "If I may judge by what I have

seen of these men, they are doing their work exceptionally well. Dr. DeForest, of Japan, was a classmate of mine in college. He was a genial, able, and thoroly admirable young man, of great promise. When I met him again, years afterward, I found that he had more than fulfilled this promise. He was a progressive missionary, willing to accept what was good in the religious thought of Japan, and to build upon that as a foundation, the higher truths of Christianity. He had passed thru some dark days, but came to be beloved and admired by all the Japanese. We saw evidences of this in the many honors shown him by high officials and dignitaries. He executed several important government commissions, and was given a high decoration by the Emperor, one seldom bestowed even upon the Japanese. This man, who could have made a brilliant career at home, was content to live upon the pitiful salary of a missionary of the American Board, for the good of this people. Men like him know what they are doing, and do not care to throw away their lives foolishly. From what I have seen, I can be sure that, as a rule, the missionaries are of a similar type, large-minded philanthropists, working for the good of the people they are among."

Progress in Osaka.

Thirty-five years ago, last month, a little band of twelve Christians, one of them the young pastor himself, formed themselves into the Second (Naniwa) Church of Osaka. This young man was ordained at the same service—the first man in Japan to be ordained to the Christian ministry. He had lived five years in America, and had, on his return to Japan, received tempting offers to high positions in government employ. While in America, he had acquired foreign habits, and was now about to acquire a Japanese wife. These needs called for a salary of at least fifteen *yen* per month; but he threw in his lot with

the Christians, who could raise only half of this amount. He and his little band of Christians became the pioneers of self-support in Japan. One of them has remained in the church till this day, and has been the moving spirit in a new enterprise just completed. During all these years, this church has not increased in numbers as much as some of the churches formed later; but it has been a power for good. And to increase its efficiency, a new Sunday-school building has been erected, adjoining the main audience-room, which also has been renovated. In these days of high taxes and expensive living, the raising of thirty-seven hundred *yen* is a great accomplishment. True to its early principles of self-support, this comparatively large amount was raised entirely among the Church numbers.

These separate buildings for Sunday-school and social purposes, are becoming a necessity to our larger churches. The First Church has one, of large proportions, and the Third Church is planning for one. In fact, it is these building enterprises which are the marked feature of present day prosperity at our churches in Osaka.

Five years ago a band of thirty Christians (the Fifth Church) took possession of a new edifice that had been erected by the combined donations of these Christians themselves, and of a loan from the Mission. The loan has been returned, and this month, the Christians, who have increased tenfold, occupy the same building, enlarged to nearly twice its former size. A remarkable story is connected with this enlargement. While rejoicing in the rapid growth of the organization during these five years, the Christians were perplexed by the lack of room in the church, for the audiences which assembled on special occasions. The Mission could render no more financial aid, and the sum appeared too large for the Christians to raise themselves. The pastor spoke of these conditions to an old lady, whose grandson had been baptized in the church. She

herself had been to the Church only on that occasion. She still held to her Buddhist beliefs, and to the custom of drinking *sake* at her meals. The pastor, however, made frequent calls at her house, and he was surprised to receive from her the offer to build this enlargement to the church, at her own expense, if the Christians would raise a certain sum for seats, mats, and other furnishings. The result is that last month witnessed also the completion of this added building, only a few weeks after it was begun. It is almost an unheard of thing that a Japanese woman, who still clings to her old habits and beliefs, opposed as they are to the teaching of these Christians, whom she is helping, should so freely and so spontaneously make a gift of more than one thousand *yen* for their benefit. She has been to church many times during the past month, and perhaps the opening of her purse may lead to the opening of her mind and heart to Christian truth.

And plans are being drawn for another church building in Osaka,—this time for the sixth church. Three years ago this enterprise was begun in an ordinary Japanese, rented house. Its progress, at the beginning, is much more rapid than that of the fifth church just mentioned. The time has come to discard the hired house, and to erect a building, with the aid of the Building Loan Fund. The Christians are few, only thirty in number, but they will double their donations of last year, in order to meet the increased running expenses, and the land rent. The church is placed in a new section of the city, which is rapidly growing, and which promises to supply a constituency to the church that may enable it to reach self-support in a very few years. It is the possibility of these newly established groups of Christians being able to reach self-support in a short time, which accounts for the large attention given, by Japanese workers especially, to evangelistic work in the large towns and cities.

And it is this willingness and ability

of the Christians in Japan, to sustain and control their own churches, which differentiates the Christian movement here from that in other Eastern lands. The missionary is still very much needed, and so also is financial aid in certain directions. None are now more ready to acknowledge this need than these same self-supporting and progressive churches. The best kind of work the missionary can do is to establish new centers, and to initiate new enterprises. But, from the beginning, the sense and the duty of self-support and self-reliance should be developed in the Christians themselves. The support and the control of these new enterprises should be placed upon the Japanese at the earliest possible date.

GEO. ALLCHIN.

The Vice-Minister's Plan for a Religious Congress.

Since the Vice-Minister of Home Affairs, Mr. T. Tokonami, has made known recently to the public, that the Minister of Home Affairs is going to call a meeting of responsible heads of all religious bodies, Buddhistic, Shintoistic, as well as Christian, in the near future, to have a mutual conference and understanding between the government and these bodies, and also between the religious bodies themselves, concerning public morals and social affairs, a wide interest has been aroused among all classes of people, and heated discussions have appeared in different papers and magazines, some approving the plan, others opposing it, while a great many, mistaking the motive and object of the plan itself, have criticized it violently.

In the first place, many think it is a plan to form a union of Religion and the State. Some think the plan is to propose union of different religions and their amalgamation into one. Others think the plan is to change the fixed policy of the Department of Education hitherto pursued, and mingle religion with education; while a great many think the plan is to use religion for political ends,

just as the last administration used the teaching of Ninomiya Sontoku. Hence a great outcry, "Away with the Vice-Minister's plan!"

Now it is clear that all such ideas are a great mistake. It is clear, also, that the authorities have not entertained any such ideas at all. Besides, the reason why some Buddhists and Shintoists oppose the plan vehemently, is that they are jealous of Christians, and do not like to sit on an equality with representatives of Christian bodies. They think both Buddhism and Shintoism are publicly recognized religions, while Christianity is not. Furthermore, there is a rumor and suspicion that the plan was first proposed from the Christian side, in the interest of Christianity, and that the authorities are under the influence of Christians. But such a rumor and suspicion are without any foundation whatever.

We had a private interview with Mr. Tokonami, a few days ago. He told us that all opposition from the side of Buddhists and Shintoists has now nearly subsided and that it is certain they will all accept an invitation to the meeting. When the meeting will be called, is not yet decided. The Vice-Minister thinks that it will be called, probably, either by the end of this month or the beginning of next. It is understood that the Home Minister will appear in person, and make an address to the effect that the three great religions must work together for upholding public morals and good customs of the country, mutually coöperating, both among themselves and with the Government itself; then the representatives themselves may pass some resolutions, or leave the subject thus, as the occasion may call. The Government does not expect any direct outcome from this meeting. What the Government intends to do, is to show respect to all religions, and call the attention of the public to the importance of religious instruction in all matters concerning morals and social customs.

The plan, it is said, has been referred to a Cabinet meeting and approved by

it; then the Vice-Minister himself went around to all the Elder Statesman and got their approval.

Now, some may ask, "What will be the result of such a congress?" We think there will be no direct, visible result. Still, the indirect result will be great. In the first place, public recognition of the importance of religious instruction, hitherto almost ignored by the State, will be emphasized by this Congress. Our Government and public men, hitherto, have paid no attention to any religion whatever. Religion has been regarded as a sort of superstition, contributing nothing to the creation of good morals and the maintenance of good social customs. But now these views are to be changed, and all religions are to be treated with more respect than before. As to the status of Christianity, it will receive public recognition, which heretofore has been denied, and it will no longer be treated as the religion of a foreign country.

We believe that, in the near future, a great interest will be awakened among our people, concerning religious matters, especially concerning the Christian religion itself, and, thus, the cause of evangelistic work will be thereby promoted much better than before.

HIROMICHI KOZAKI.

Niigata Celebrations.

The Niigata Memorial Building described in the last number of *MISSION NEWS*, has, in actual use, proved to be well adapted to the purposes for which it was planned, and a great help to the religious and social life of the church. In this connection, the Christmas and New Year's celebrations, a church supper, and a wedding are events worthy of special mention. The wedding was one of the prettiest church weddings we have seen in Japan. It was especially noteworthy from the fact that both bride and bridegroom have, for many years, been strong, earnest Christian workers in the church. The young man holds a position of trust in

one of the banks, and is well known in business circles. As an officer of the church and President of the Y.M.C.A., he is a prominent leader among the Christians. The young woman, a daughter of a leading physician in the city, is head nurse and teacher in one of the Training Schools for Nurses, and a faithful worker in the church. Both of these young people were brought into the church thru the work in our mission chapels. Their home will be a new center for Christian influence in Niigata. Theirs was truly "an ideal marriage," as everyone said at the time, and it was quite evident that the young couple thought so too! This, alas, is not always the case where the real "contracting parties" are the parents or guardians, instead of the young people themselves, who too often know nothing of each other until they meet at the marriage altar. The frequent unhappy marriages, and the many Christians "unequally yoked to unbelievers," that we see in Japan, make us rejoice over every newly established Christian family where husband and wife are both believers. Niigata is fortunate in having already celebrated three Christian weddings in the new church.

The Christmas celebrations were quite as numerous and successful as in former years. At the Church, on Christmas night, there was a great crowd. Many were obliged to stand thru the four hour program, and many failed to get inside at all. At the missionary home, on the following night, there were fifty present at the Christmas-tree and entertainment of our neighborhood Sunday-school. This Sunday-school, by the way, consists of little girls only, and is remarkable for its good singing, especially for the rendering of two and three part songs, which is something unusual among Japanese children. There were three other Christmas gatherings in the home, including our family celebration. On the third evening our large Sunday-school, on Gakko Cho (School Street), had the prettiest tree, the most unique decorations, the best rendered program, and one of the best

behaved audiences of the whole Christmas week. The excellent order was very gratifying testimony to the good influence this Sunday-school is exerting on a neighborhood where, in years gone by, our meetings have often been disturbed.

The Nagaoka Christmas entertainment was the only out-station celebration I was able to attend this year, but a very interesting one was reported from Sanashi, where the Christians and inquirers, to the number of forty, enjoyed a Christmas supper together, in the hospitable Sakurai home, after a very spiritually helpful service, in which old and young took part.

The annual New Year's social and supper of the Niigata Church, was the first large gathering in the new Memorial Building. The convenience and the beauty of the well furnished rooms added much to the comfort and pleasure of the large company present. The supper of hot *sekihan* (red beans and rice), with a side dish of cold fish, *tofu*, lotus seed-pods, pickles, etc., and the usual tea and cakes, was furnished for fifteen *sen* each, (seven and one half cents), with an extra bonus of half a dozen oranges each. Our friends in America may be interested to learn that the Church supper as a money making institution, is still unknown in Japan.

The January *fujinkwai* was the first woman's meeting to be held in the new rooms, and in spite of an unusual amount of sickness among the members, it was largely attended and greatly enjoyed by the women that had looked forward, for so many months, to the time when the building, for which they had planned and labored so earnestly, should be completed.

Another celebration, which we hope to report next month, is the twenty-fifth anniversary of the founding of the Niigata Church. This notable event in the history of Christian work in Echigo, will take place on the 11th of this month, the great national holiday.

WILLIAM LEAVITT CURTIS.

The Day of Prayer at Kobe College.

The last Thursday in January, known for many years as the Day of Prayer for Schools and Colleges, has long been a unique day at Kobe College. Never a year goes by, when some of the graduates do not write that they are thinking of us and praying for us as the day approaches. It is a day "when Sunday comes in the middle of the week," yet it is not like any Sunday of the year. We have always made more or less preparation for the day, by turning our attention often to it during the preceding days, but this year, for the third time, our committee planned a formal series of preparatory meetings, beginning on the 18th. The lessons were made a little easier, all that week, that there might not be undue pressure on the students, to make it hard for them to concentrate their attention on spiritual things. As many of the faculty as were able to do so, met for a half hour of prayer each evening at six. The regular Bible classes, at nine in the morning, were omitted, and the time usually given to them was added to the chapel exercises, which were presided over, for the week, by Mr. Yonezawa, the new pastor of the Kobe Church. As his wife is one of our graduates, he is naturally interested in the school. As special evangelistic work was going on in the city churches, we were able to secure Mr. Ebina and Mr. Miyagawa, for two of the morning talks. Mr. Kato, editor of the *Kirisuto Kyo Sekai*, spoke one morning, and, the other two days, Mr. Imaizumi, pastor of the Tamon Church, and Mr. Nagasaka. Altho Mr. Nagasaka is no longer formally connected with the college, he kindly responds to frequent invitations to speak for us, and always gives us something worth hearing. Because of this fact, and because of his thoro knowledge of conditions in the school, the committee invited him to address the general meeting in the chapel, Thursday forenoon, when the women of the Evangelistic School united with us, and when a good

number of our graduates were present. He also conducted three voluntary afternoon meetings for our students, during the week. The alternate afternoons there were "question meetings," also voluntary, one for the younger students, led by Mr. Usaburo Takahashi, and one for older students, led by Mr. Yonezawa. The subjects of the morning chapel talks were: What is Human Life for? The Aspirations of Worldly Heroes and Christianity. Woman as a Human Being. A Woman of the Present Age. The Inner Voice in Meditation.

The local pastors of all denominations are always invited to spend the day at the college, and we American teachers have usually served lunch to them and the gentlemen of the faculty, while the graduates have been entertained in the dormitory dining room. This year, instead of furnishing a foreign meal, we had a Japanese lunch brought in, and twenty-four of us enjoyed it together, in one of the recitation rooms.

The closing meetings of the day are those in which some of the pastors meet the students by classes, and answer their questions, while the faculty hold a prayer meeting. After this, the pastors come to talk over results with as many of us as can stay, over a cup of tea, while the students go for their walk, the academy girls being allowed, on that one day of the year, to go out quietly in little groups, without chaperones.

The reports this year were, on the whole, encouraging, tho one class, it was said, seemed to be trying to examine the pastor rather than to gain spiritual help. From one class which was reported to have been especially interested, we heard the next day that the girls felt as if the pastor were their father. He took the names of those who were not Christians and promised to pray for them until they gave themselves to Christ, asking them in return to let him know when they did so. One little girl thought if she should become a Christian, and should die and go to heaven, and her father should die without becoming a Christian, and go to

a different place, it would be very unfortunate, and she would seem to be lacking in filial duty not to allow her father the precedence, so she ought not to become a Christian until he was one. This question of filial duty is not always an easy one for our students to settle. Nor is it always easy for us to quote "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me." When a daughter does not acknowledge herself a Christian because she can be such a comfort to her widowed mother by going with her to the Buddhist shrines, and joining in the worship, we are reminded of Naaman in the house of Rimmon, and are almost tempted to say with Elisha, "Go in peace."

(MISS) SUSAN A. SEARLE.

Tsuyama after a Year.

It seemed perfectly natural to be sitting again in a little car of the Chugoku Railway, moving leisurely between Okayama and Tsuyama. We missed, however, the ubiquitous, diminutive "boy," always so solicitous for our comfort. Evidently economy rules here. We were not surprised at finding Tsuyama still the terminus. We have, however, reached the year, long since decided upon, for beginning extension westward.

It was good to see the old faces once more, and to be welcomed back so warmly to our old home. The only material change we notice, is a new gateway to the church lot. Four stone pillars, with an iron gate, now replace the decaying, wooden structure. This was made possible by a gift from a woman who died a few years ago, of consumption. The Christians befriended her, when she was deserted by all others. It was decided to put the money into this gateway as a memorial to her. We were glad to find that our absence had produced a superintendent for the Sunday-school. We can now give the time formerly required for that work, to a large class of Middle School students, in the English New Testament.

It used to be said that Tsuyama was ten years behind Okayama. Perhaps the railroad has reduced it to five, but it is still very conservative. The reaction in the educational world against Christianity, seems to have culminated during our absence. As a result, a teacher in the Girls' High School has given up her position as teacher in Sunday-school. She no longer even comes to church, so anti-Christian is the attitude of the principal. Indeed the attitude of practically all teachers is opposed to Christianity. I should add, however, that there are two in our English Bible class. A new desire for Bible study, on the part of men in the Church, bro't a request for Old Testament instruction. We have, therefore, begun a weekly class in Isaiah. While we were on furlo, several attendants at the mission chapel, united with the church. Our Sunday-school there has increased in membership, now averaging sixty. We found the work in the outstations waiting for us. Nothing was done for them during our absence. The people were most glad to see us. We have begun regular visits to five towns. The number of Christians in each place is small, but furnishes a good nucleus for a new start. In one of the places lives a physician, whom we first visited about fifteen years ago. At that time he was never particularly pleased with our visits, being a lover of *sake*, and very dissipated. Four years ago he at length yielded to the leading of the Spirit. Just before our furlo, he united with the Church. We find him now most earnest, and his home is the center for Christian work in that place. His changed feelings were shown by a most cordial telegram of welcome, upon our arrival. During my last visit in his home, he received a copy of Dr. Takagi's new Dictionary of Christianity, which he had ordered upon its recent publication.

Last week a meeting was held in a village of five hundred population, less than twenty miles from here. It was remarkable for the fact that it was the first one ever held there. The writer

was not present, being engaged in another part of the province. The pastor and one of the deacons addressed about twenty-five of the leading people, at the home of a physician. They expressed great gratification at having been afforded an opportunity to hear what Christianity really is, and a desire to know more of it—a sad commentary on the dearth of workers, for last year was celebrated the twentieth anniversary of this church. There are not a few places like this, where Christianity is yet to be presented for the first time. We returned to find our pastor the only worker in the entire province, the one of the two other churches is soon to have one. "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few." We rejoice that we are privileged to make one more in this still needy field.

SCHUYLER S. WHITE.

Work at Hokubu.

Our Hobubu Chapel has just had its first birthday. Of course you all know we have had work here for years; that is, we had a Sunday-school, and the children were just *awful*, while Tuesday evenings we had lectures. I have known them to be met by an empty house, but to tell of all the ups and downs, and of the heart-aches, would make enough to fill a book, and I am not going to write a history, but, to tell something of the work this past year. I wish I could put some of the joy that I have had in this work, into this report, so that you might all see and rejoice with me, and feel that you must each one pray that God will bless us, even more this year.

After much talk and consultation for months, on January 2, 1911, we began church services with an audience of twenty. All the year we have worked with the thought: "This next year, after local conference," (which comes in the spring) "we will organize into a regular church." We have had a very regular attendance at the morning service, while, in the

evening, we have had anywhere from twelve to two hundred. We have been such a happy little family, all working together; and all who come, feel the welcome and want to be one with us. Eleven adults and three children have been baptized through the year. One of the adults was the wife of a railway official in Korea. She had been studying the Bible for the last four or five years, but has moved about so much that she had not joined any church. Her home is here in Okayama, and she wished her church home to be here also; thus, while she was home for the holidays, she asked to join this church. On January 14 we had a special communion service for her, and on the 18th she started for Korea.

During the year there have been two funerals, one for a young man, who, years ago, was in my Bible class. While I was in America he became sick, and, for nearly four years, suffered with tuberculosis. His beautiful life, those four years, impressed his mother and brother very much. They are thinking yet, but have not decided. It is my prayer that they may come this year.

The other funeral was for a young woman. The old mother, who had been a strong Buddhist, has given up Buddhism, comes regularly to church, and is studying the Bible. One other of the relations, who was at the funeral, when he heard the music and saw the flowers, said, "I thought a Christian funeral would be dreadful, but it is all beautiful."

We have had a wedding, too. One of the soldiers, who became a Christian, and joined the church in March, 1910, took, as his bride, a Christian girl from Tsuyama.

The Week of Prayer was a week of blessing to all who attended, and there were never less than thirteen.

This account of the work would be incomplete, if I should not tell of the money raised for the new building; for we hope sometime to tear down this old place, and build a neat little church. We have all worked, men, women, and children, and we have put into the bank

269.59 yen. We are very proud of our little sum.

I must speak, too, of the change in the Sunday-school children. We have almost double the number we used to have, one hundred and sixty on the roll, and an average attendance of about one hundred and twenty; it is a Sunday-school to be proud of now.

On Monday evening, January 22, we had a thanksgiving meeting, and of those who attended the first church service, there were at least four absent. We had thought perhaps there would be twenty-five, but there were twenty-seven.

We are glad, because of what we have been able to accomplish, but we want to do more this next year.

(MISS) MARY E. WAINWRIGHT.

A Shinto Festival.

Nishinomiya is a town of twenty thousand inhabitants, between Kobe and Osaka, with reputation, far and near, for production of rice-wine. Altho the Gospel has been preached there, at least since 1877, when our missionaries began to visit the place, and altho there has been a *Kumi-ai* church since 1885, yet the impression always made, is that the great industry of *sake*-brewing exercises a powerfully deadening influence over the inhabitants in matters spiritual. More than one pastor has been discouraged by the uphill work. The success of any spiritual effort means, so far forth, defeat of the prized industry which affords prosperity to the town. But there is one religious institution which flourishes—a Shinto shrine, where Ebisu is worshipt. Now Ebisu is a popular member of the select circle of *shichi-fuku-jin*, the seven gods of luck, and since men are lucky when successful in labor, trade, crafts, or industry, they are eager to stand in well with Ebisu, patron of work. He is “a widely worshipt deity of unknown origin. [?] He is a favorite subject of the artist,

and is usually depicted with a smiling countenance (*ebi*, means “to smile”), in ancient Japanese costume, and holding a fishing rod, while a *tai* [bream] struggles at the end of his line. Merchants hold a great feast in his honor on the 20th of the 10th month.” Ebisu is “the only one of the eight million deities to remain at large during October, which is called the godless month, because all the other gods then desert their proper shrines and go off to the great temple of Izumo. The reason for Ebisu’s not accompanying them, is that, being deaf, he does not hear their summons. On this day [Oct. 20] tradesmen sell off their surplus stock, and give entertainments to their customers. At present, when all such antique customs are falling into desuetude, the 20th of October has come to be regarded rather as a day for social gatherings” of gilds, politicians, etc. Ebisu is said to be the third son of the creative pair, Izanagi and Izanami.

The shrine at Nishinomiya is beautifully situated on the edge of the town, mid spacious grounds, with walks and ponds spanned by stone bridges, within a large grove, one may almost say, of hoary, crooked, picturesque pines. Ordinarily it would be a delightful spot for a quiet stroll, or for lounging with a book, or for a visit with friends. The annual festival used to occur some time in February, on the first day of the horse, in the first month of the lunar calendar, and was a much more important event, for the citizens, at least, than now; for, in olden times, when railways and modern conveyances—the *kuruma* was invented only half a century back—were unknown, people by hundreds flockt there, trudging from all the country side round—Tamba, Banshu, Gokinai, and what not. Local hotels were filled to repletion, and lodgings were often hard to secure, and then at a premium. In those days the world did not move as rapidly as to-day, and large numbers of devotees lingered longer in town. *Sake* being the chief product of the town, heavy drinking was in vogue, while debauchery,

gambling, feasting, and revelry were indulged in, so that moralists shake the head in a significant way, and exclaim; "Bad! bad!!" In these days, owing to the attention of the police, on one hand, and, on the other, to the ease and slight expense with which worshippers may take tram or train to reach home in a few hours, the *morale* of this great festival is said to have greatly improved, while the prosperity of lodging-houses has correspondingly decreased. The combined use by the people, of both new and old calendars, has redounded to the honor of Ebisu, however, since, not knowing whether the god has adopted the new calendar, or still prefers the old; his annual festival is observed for three days about January 10, and for the same about February 10, when crowds attend; and there is great stir and flutter all along lines of travel to Nishinomiya. All ages on trains and in streets, bear branches of bamboo, among whose green leaves dangle and sparkle an odd variety of toy implements and brilliant colored ornaments; among these are gilt *koban* (money), a bale of rice, a measure, a rake, a spade, a winnowing basket, a mallet, a stand with Ebisu stamp on it—such as is used for offerings, and for New Year's rice-dumplings, a *sake-tub*, a fan, a purse, a money-bag labeled: "Fifty thousand *yen*," a merchant's ledger labeled: "*Waka Ebisu, Dai Fuku Cho*" (Young Ebisu's Great Goodluck Book), storks, Ebisu-images, long, cuneiform shavings (representing *noshi*, which is given with a present—really a preparation from a marine product), and other articles symbolical of all sorts of good luck. The significance of most is readily seen in their relation to the everyday occupations and interests of this class of people. But the wooden mallets, so much in evidence, are said to be used by worshippers to pound on the god's quarters, to call his attention to the prayers and worship, since he is deaf. *Mi* (baskets) with smiling masks of Ebisu tied within, are very common objects.

Next to one's surprise at the crowds,

is that at the number of booths and the thriving trade at them, in the above articles and others, not omitting plenty of refreshments. As the temple at Jerusalem was a scene of traffic, so is this enclosure. The religious ceremonies themselves seem a mere trade in the superstitious awe and reverence of the ignorant devotees, who spend their hard earned coins for nought but a farcical performance of the *kagura*, (sacred dance), or for lot-drawing from the many receptacles held by a row of attendants. At the *kagura dō*, or dance-hall, one sees and hears the red-faced, *sake*-feverish masters of the *kagura*, hawking in loud, irreverential tones and manner, the service supposed to particularly delight the god. One gives his name and pays his money; then a maiden shakes a *suzu* (a bunch of tiny sleighbells on a wire frame, with handle) over his bowed head. The musicians strike up, and one of several maidens, with flowing hair, scarlet skirts, and light colored native waists, who perform by turns, holding a *suzu*, or a short sword, executes various movements, as she postures back and forth before a sort of altar, on which the articles are deposited when not in use. The service is never long, but depends on the amount of money paid, like *pater noster*. Passing with the throng towards a gateway to the courtyard between the hall of worship and the shrine, one comes to the *harai-dokoro*, or shed where an aged priest, in white, with black cap, flourishes over the heads of the crowd, an instrument like a duster often used by maids for whipping the dust off *shoji* and other parts of a room—a bamboo handle, to which several long strips of hard-twisted paper are attached. He thus drives away their sins and purifies them for entrance within the court, to worship immediately before the shrine. Many a coin is tost within this, a brief prayer is uttered, and on they go to where, for half a cent, one may draw a lot. Ours was "No. 14, Half good," one which seemed to be shaken out of the boxes more than any other. Here it is:



CROWDS AT PRAYER BEFORE THE HALL OF WORSHIP (HAIDEN),
AT EBISU'S SHRINE, NISHINOMIYA.



A VISTA IN THE SPACIOUS GROUNDS OF EBISU'S SHRINE,
SHOWING THE KAGURA-DO IN THE ENTER.

るゝといふはたれのしれものはかりても世のこどわりはそこひなきもの

第十四番 半吉

此歌は世の中の理は限ある人の力にてはかり知られざるものなればさかしらごゝろもてどやかくおもひゝがめず只神を念じて神のみこころに任すがよしとなり

frequent gifts to the shrine is a big tub of *sake*, and quantities of these fresh, new tubs are seen piled in the long corridor. Not a few of the articles of furniture within the enclosure are the gifts of people, in one way or another, directly engaged in the great brewing interests, which seem embodied in Ebisu. The one hopeful incident about the last great festival was that, by the roadside, where the crowds past to and from the tram, there was an open-door Christian service going on constantly, where preaching could be heard and literature distributed—a unique sight crowded in tightly amid the numerous booths.

ARTHUR W. STANFORD.

Hyuga Items.

I came home last Monday from ten days of work in the Obi-Fukushima field. My first object was to help Obi, whose pastor lingered near death's door for some days recently, but is a little farther removed now. The two Sundays included in the time, were given to Obi, the rest to five other places, a day each, with a good, large, attentive meeting, a Bible class, and many personal calls. The interest seemed unusually good, and the prospect is encouraging.

The skeleton of the new kindergarten building at Miyazaki, is to be set up this week; that of the School Girls' Home, a few days later. Mrs. Davis reached here on Tuesday, 30th—a very welcome visitor. Mrs. Clark is absent, in the north, presumably recruiting strength. Last Saturday and Sunday, Miyazaki was favored with a visit from G. M. Fisher and his Japanese associate, and new interest was aroused in the Y.M.C.A.

Railroad building in Hyuga is progressing. The road-bed is completed from Yoshimatsu through Kobayashi, and some distance beyond—ten *ri* or so in all; other lesser railroad projects begin to loom in view. A recent gathering here of all the leading officials and men of influence in the province, for a week of discussion about Hyuga's improvement, is one of the encouraging signs.

商人目前の利にまよひて失敗す
病人長引ども命に別條なしまよふかべらず
うせ物久しく出でず
まぢ人來るべし
家造移轉等し
方角異の方
此の
くべからず氣をゆたかに持つべし

After an introductory statement of the impossibility of knowing everything, because knowledge is illimitable and human ability circumscribed, and therefore we should not be anxious, but trust the gods and leave all to them, there follow six cautions: 1. A merchant who is deluded by the temptation to immediate profit, must fail. Beware! 2. If ill, even tho protractedly, you'll pull thru. 3. If you lose anything it will be long before you find it. 4. The man you await, will come. 5. Postpone building, removal, etc. 6. Your lucky point is southeast. The parting consolation is that the one who draws this lot must not be in a rush about everything, but must "go slow."

One of the most coveted and most

We have a wide-awake, enterprising Governor in Mr. Ariyoshi, a member of Kobe *Kumi-ai* Church.

This year is to be celebrated as the twentieth anniversary of several things in Hyuga, relating to evangelistic work, among which is the coming of a missionary family. Special evangelistic work is proposed, and plans for this are maturing.

C. A. CLARK.

Tottori, Japan, Jan. 12, 1912.

Dear Editor,

I got home this morning, after some adventures. I got the early train from Kobe, 5 a.m., and got to Himeji about 7.20 a.m. yesterday morning. I expected to find a train going out for Kasumi, on the Bantan line, in about fifteen minutes, but I either made a mistake in reading the time-table, or else they had taken the train off, for I did not get away until after nine. I was hoping to get to Kasumi about one, but, instead, I got there at three. I inquired about the boat, and about *jimrikisha*, but I found out that there was nothing doing, so I had to hire a *kago*. I had about five *ri* to go in the snow, and I might have walked it, but my foot was a little bad, so I got in the *kago*, and I think it was a good thing I did, as it was cold, and there was quite a little snow in the road. My intention was to get the last train from Hamazaka to Tottori, but the delay in Himeji made that impossible, so I told the men to get me through to Hamazaka if they could, so that I could get the early train this morning. They kept going until dark. There I was in a little round basket, with just about room enough to curl my feet in under me, as I do when I sit on the floor, and my head came up just high enough to bump against the bamboo pole which held the basket up. I was surprised however, to see how warm I could keep. Except for my feet getting a little cold, I did not suffer from the cold at all. The road was pretty bad, so, about dark, the men took to the railroad track. The *kago* had curtains around it,

to keep out the wind, and I had a big hand-stove (*danro* they called it). I could not see very much, except through a peck-hole in front. As we were going along, I happened to look down, and found out that we were going across a railroad bridge. The trains are not running in the district yet, so I was not afraid of getting run over, but I did not know whether I would eventually land up at the bottom or not. And after awhile, I judged from the sound of the men's voices that we were going through a tunnel, and sure enough we were. We went through one tunnel more than a mile long, and when we got about to the middle, we heard some voices ahead, and saw a light. The men evidently had a little discussion as to what to do, and they finally decided to go ahead. I was not sure at first whether we had struck robbers or not, but I finally made up my mind that we had run into the police, and sure enough we had. There were two of them, and they came up and gave my men "Hail Columbia" for going through the tunnel, and ordered them to go back. We were more than half way through, and I tell you, the men were pretty humble. They told the police that if they would let them through this time, they would never do it again. The policemen acted pretty fierce for awhile, but finally let them through. The police could not see me, on account of the curtains, and I had all I could do to keep from snorting; if they had made the men turn around and go back, I was going to try to use my gentle arts of persuasion, to see if they would not let me go on through. But they finally let the men pass, and told them not to do it again, or words to that effect. I got to Hamazaka too late to catch the last train, so I had to stay there for the night. But I had a very comfortable night, and got home this morning by the first train.

We are having quite a snow-storm here, and I suppose there is about a foot of snow on the ground.

As ever,

H. J. BENNETT.

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	p.m.	a.m.	a.m.	
Arrive Sannomiya.....	9.16	7.12	8.55	6.04
	a.m.	p.m.	p.m.	
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MISSION NEWS.

ADVERTISEMENT OF VOLUME XV.

This paper is published on the fifteenth of each month (excepting August and October) in the interests of the work of the American Board Mission in Japan. Its principal features are:

1. Reports of the educational and evangelistic work of the Mission.
2. News-Letters from the various Stations, giving details of personal work.
3. Incidents, showing results of evangelistic work in the life and character of individuals.
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